



West Nile Virus Confirmed in Newton Mosquitoes

**August 8, 2013
Newton, MA**

West Nile Virus (WNV) has been detected in four Newton mosquito pools, the City's Health & Human Services Department announced today. There have been no reports of human infection in Massachusetts so far this year.

The mosquitoes were trapped throughout the city, so residents should take precautions to prevent mosquito bites regardless of where they live.

"This was not a surprise given the West Nile Virus positive samples collected in neighboring communities over the past few weeks," said Dori Zaleznik, Newton's Health and Human Services Commissioner. "We know the virus is here, and it is important for people to take precautions like using mosquito repellent and limiting outdoor activities between dusk and dawn."

WNV is most commonly transmitted to humans by the bite of a mosquito infected with the virus. While WNV can infect people of all ages, people over the age of 50 are at higher risk for severe infection. Newton residents have contracted the illness in previous years, and some of them have been hospitalized.

"Most people who get West Nile Virus have a mild flu-like illness or do not experience symptoms at all," Zaleznik said. "But it can cause severe disease, including high fever, headache, stiff neck and even disorientation or coma in some people."

Newton's efforts to address mosquito-borne illness are to treat catch basins where mosquitoes carrying WNV develop and to regularly trap and test mosquitoes to monitor the presence of WNV in the community. Newton participates in the East Middlesex Mosquito Control Project. There are no plans to spray for mosquitoes in Newton.

Here are a few, common-sense precautions people can take to protect themselves and their loved ones from mosquito-borne infections:

- **Wear mosquito repellent when outdoors.** Use a repellent with **DEET** (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide), **permethrin**, **picaridin** (KBR 3023), **IR3535** or **oil of lemon eucalyptus** [p-methane 3, 8-diol (PMD)] according to the instructions on the product label. DEET products should not be used on infants under two months of age and should be used in concentrations of 30% or less on older children. Oil of lemon eucalyptus should not be used on children under three years of age. Permethrin products are intended for use on items such as clothing, shoes, bed nets and camping gear and should not be applied to skin.
- **Weather permitting, wear long sleeves and long pants** when outdoors during peak mosquito hours (from dusk to dawn)
- **Use mosquito netting** on baby carriages and playpens outdoors
- **Repair** window and door screens in your home
- **Dump standing water** twice weekly
- **Be aware of stagnant water** on private property (e.g. unused swimming pools)- these should be reported to the Health & Human Services Department

For more information, contact the Department at (617) 796-1420 or visit www.mass.gov/dph/mosquito

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